

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims. Only those claims being amended herein show their changes in highlighted form, where insertions appear as underlined text (e.g., insertions) while deletions appear as strikethrough text or with double bracketing (e.g., ~~deletions~~ or ~~[[delete]]~~).

1. (Currently Amended) A patient ventilating and aspirating system, comprising:
a pressurised source of gases,
gases transport means adapted to convey said gases in use to a ~~[[said]]~~ a patient,
a patient connector, adapted to deliver said gases to ~~[[a]]~~ said patient through a tracheostomy or endotracheal tube fitting, said patient connector adapted to be in fluid communication with said gases transport means in use,
a catheter mount that is substantially tubular and adapted to be fitted in use between said patient connector and said gases transport means, said catheter mount including an additional passageway for receiving an aspirating system, said passageway covered by a seal, said seal including a re-sealing mechanism, and
a suction tube, with a distal end and a proximal end, surrounded by a collapsible envelope, said distal end fitted with a distal connector and said proximal end being moveable through a proximal connector attached to said envelope, said distal connector adapted to allow said distal end of said suction tube to be connected to a suction means in use, said proximal connector being releasably connected to said catheter mount, said proximal connector including a piercing member capable of piercing said seal when said proximal connector and said catheter mount are connected, said suction tube capable of passing through said piercing member and not contacting said seal.
2. (Currently Amended) A patient ventilating and aspirating system according to claim 1 wherein said proximal connector is adapted such that when connected to said catheter mount a chamber is formed, said chamber ~~surrounding said sealing means~~ abutting an outer surface of said seal and an outer surface of said piercing member and creating a dead space therein.

3. (Original) A patient ventilating and aspirating system according to claim 2 wherein said proximal connector and said catheter mount are adapted such that when connected, adjacent surfaces on said proximal connector and said catheter mount abut to form a seal and prevent gases leaking into said chamber through said seal from exiting to the atmosphere.

4. (Currently Amended) A patient ventilating and aspirating system according to anyone of claims 1 to 3 wherein ~~said connection between~~ said catheter mount and said proximal connector ~~[[is]]~~ are releasably connected with a bayonet fitting.

5. (Previously Presented) A patient ventilating and aspirating system according to claim 1 wherein said seal is made from an elastomeric material, and provides a substantially airtight seal at normal operating pressures.

6. (Currently Amended) A patient ventilating and aspirating system according to claim 5 wherein said seal includes a perforation, said perforation allowing the piercing of said seal by said piercing member, where said elastomeric material ~~[[re-seal]]~~ re-seals said passageway once said proximal connector is detached from said catheter mount.

7. (Currently Amended) A patient ventilating and aspirating system according to claim 2 wherein said chamber and said dead space are shaped in such a manner that gases within said gases transport conduit means that may leak through said seal once pierced are enclosed and contained within said dead space.

8. (Previously Presented) A patient ventilating and aspirating system according to claim 1 wherein said passageway through said catheter mount allows passage of said suction tube there through and entry into said tracheostomy or endotracheal fitting without said suction tube contacting the internal walls of said catheter mount.

9. (Previously Presented) A patient ventilating and aspirating system according to claim 1 wherein said proximal connector includes a washer to wipe said suction tube upon removal of said suction tube from said catheter mount.

10. (Original) A suction tube and connector for connecting to a catheter mount having a sealed passageway comprising:

- a tube, with a distal end and a proximal end,
- a collapsible envelope surrounding said tube,

a distal connector fitted to said distal end and adapted to allow said distal end of said suction tube to be connected to a suction means in use,

a proximal connector attached to said envelope that said proximal end of said tube is moveable through,

said proximal connector that is releasably connected to said catheter mount,

a piercing member that is capable of piercing said seal and said suction tube is capable of passing through said piercing member and not contact said seal.

11. (Currently Amended) A suction tube according to claim 10 wherein said proximal connector is adapted such that when connected to said catheter mount a chamber is formed, said chamber ~~surrounding said sealing means~~ abutting an outer surface of said seal and an outer surface of said piercing member and creating a dead space therein.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Cancelled)

14. (New) A catheter mount comprising:

at least three passageways;

a first of said at least three passageways being adapted to be connected to a patient connector;

a second of said at least three passageways being adapted to be connected to a gases transport means;

a third of said at least three passageways being covered by a seal, said seal including a re-sealing mechanism, and being adapted to receive an aspirating system; and

said catheter mount being adapted to be fitted in use between said patient connector and said gases transport means.

15. (New) A catheter tube connector for a suction system comprising:

an outer cup-shaped fitting;

an inner cup-shaped fitting nested within said outer cup-shaped fitting; and

a piercing member nested within said inner cup-shaped fitting, said piercing member adapted to pierce a seal;

a rim of said outer cup-shaped fitting extending beyond a rim of said inner cup-shaped fitting;

said piercing member extending beyond said rim of said outer cup-shaped fitting;

a first end of said catheter tube connector being adapted to be in communication with a suction system;

a second end of said catheter tube connector being adapted to be releasably connected to a catheter mount passageway covered by a seal such that said rim of said inner cup-shaped fitting abuts an end of said catheter mount passageway and such that said piercing member pierces said seal when said catheter tube connector and said catheter mount are connected;

said piercing member adapted to allow a suction tube to pass through said piercing member and into said catheter mount passageway without said suction tube contacting said seal; and

said suction tube fitting snugly within said piercing member.

16. (New) A catheter tube connector for a suction system according to claim 15, wherein said outer cup-shaped fitting is fitted with a releasable lockable bayonet fitting.